THE WESTERN LUMINARY.

"THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF."—Rev. xxi. 23.

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CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

The utility and importance of Creeds and Confessions: an Introductory Lecture, delivered at the opening of the summer session of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church. Princeton, July 2, 1824.—BY SAMUEL MILLER, D. D. *Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary.*

[Continued from page 597.]

2. Another objection frequently made to church Creeds is, that they INTERFERE WITH THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE, AND NATURALLY LEAD TO OPPRESSION. "What right," say those who urge this objection, "has any church, or body of churches, to impose a Creed on me, or dictate to me what I shall believe? To attempt such dictation is tyranny; to submit to it, is to surrender the right of private judgment."

There would be some ground for this objection, if a Creed were, in any case, *imposed* by the civil government, or by an established church; if any were obliged to receive it, under heavy pains and disabilities, whether they approved it or not. But as such a case does not, and happily, cannot exist in our favoured country, the objection is surely as illegitimate in reasoning, as it is false in fact.

It will not, surely, be denied by any one, that a body of Christians have a right, in every free country, to associate and walk together upon such principles as they may choose to agree upon, not inconsistent with public order.

They have no right, indeed, to decide or to judge *for others*, nor can they *compel* any man to join them, But it is surely their privilege to judge *for themselves*; to agree upon the plan of *their own association;* to determine upon what principles they will receive other members into their brotherhood; and to form a set of rules which will exclude from their body those with whom they cannot walk in harmony. The question is, not whether they make, in all cases, a wise and scriptural use of this right to follow the dictates of conscience—but whether they possess the right at all?

Let us suppose a church to be actually associated upon the principle laid down; its Creed and other articles adopted, and published for the information of all who may wish to be informed; and its members walking together in harmony and love. Suppose, while things are in this situation, a person comes to them, and addresses them thus—"I demand admittance into your body, though I can neither believe the doctrines which you profess to embrace, nor consent to be governed by the rules which you have agreed to adopt."—What answer would they be apt to give him? They would certain-

ly reply—"Your demand is very unreasonable. Our union is a voluntary one, for our mutual spiritual benefit. We have not solicited you to join us; and you cannot possibly have a right to *force* yourself into our body. The whole world is before you. Go where you please. We cannot agree to receive you, unless you are willing to walk with us upon our principles." Such an answer would undoubtedly be deemed a proper one by every reasonable person. Suppose, however, this applicant were still to urge his demand; to claim admission as *a right;* and upon being finally refused, to complain, that the society had "persecuted" and "injured" him? Would any one think him possessed of common sense? Nay, would not the society in question, if they could be compelled to receive such an applicant, instead of being oppressors of others, cease to be free themselves?

The same principle would still more strongly apply, in case of a clergyman offering himself to such a church, as a candidate for the station of pastor among them. Suppose, when he appeared to make a tender of his services, they were to present him with a copy of that Creed, and of that form of government and of worship which they had unanimously adopted, and to say—"This is what we believe. We pretend not to prescribe to *others*; but 'so we have learned Christ;' so we understand the scriptures; and thus we wish ourselves, our children, and all who look up to us for guidance, to be instructed. Can you subscribe to these formularies? Are you willing to come among us *upon these principles*, and, as our pastor, thus to break to us, and our little ones, what we deem 'the bread of life?' " Could the candidate complain of such a demand? Many speak as if the church, in putting him to to this test, undertook to "judge for him." But nothing can be more remote from the truth. They only undertake to judge for themselves. If the candidate cannot or will not accept of the test, he will be, of course, rejected. But, in this case, no judgment is passed on his state toward God; no ecclesiastical censure, not even the smallest, is inflicted upon him. The church only claim a right to be served in the ministerial office by a man who is of the same religion with themselves. And is this an unreasonable demand? Are not the rights of conscience reciprocal? Or do they demand, that, while a church shall be prohibited from "oppressing" an individual, an individual shall be allowed to "oppress" a church? Surely it cannot be necessary to wait for an answer.

Accordingly, the transactions of secular life, furnish every day a practical refutation of the objection which I am now considering. Does the head of a family, when a person applies to be received as a resident under his roof, ever doubt that he has a right to inquire whether the applicant be willing to conform to the rules of his family or not; and if he decline this conformity, to refuse him admission? And if a candidate who fell totally short of the qualifications required, and who, of course, was rejected, should make a great outcry, that he was "wantonly" and "tyrannically" deprived of the place to which he aspired, would not every one think him insane, or worse than insane? The same principle applies to every voluntary association, for moral, literary, or other lawful purposes. But where is the essential difference between any one of these rights, and the right of any community of professing christians to agree upon what they deem the scriptural principles of their own union; and to refuse admission into their body to those whom they consider as unfriendly to the great purposes of truth and edification, for the promotion of which they associated? To deny them

this right, would be to make them slaves indeed!

It will probably, however, be alled ged, that a church cannot, properly speaking, be considered as a *voluntary association*; that it is a community instituted by the authority of Christ; that its laws are given by Him, as its sovereign Head and Lord; and that its rulers are in fact only stewards, bound to conform themselves in all that they do to his will; that, if the church, were their own, they would have a right to shut out from it whom they pleased; but as it is Christ's, they must find some other rule of proceeding than their own volitions. This is, doubtless all true,

Yet it does not alter "one jot or tittle," the spirit of the foregoing reasoning. The union of christians in a church state, must still, from the nature of things, be a *voluntary act;* for if it were not so, it would not be a *moral act* at all. But if the union be voluntary, then those who form it, must certainly be supposed to have a right to follow their own convictions as to what their Divine Master has revealed and enjoined respecting the laws of their union. If *they* are not to judge in this matter, who, I ask, is to judge for them? Has the Head of the Church, then, prescribed any qualifications as necessary for private membership, or for admission to the ministerial office, in his church? If so, what are they? Will any degree of departure from the purity of faith and practice, be sufficient to exclude a man? If it will, to whom has our Lord committed the task of applying his law, and judging in any particular case? to the applicants or delinquents themselves; or to the church in which membership is desired? If to the latter, on what principles is she bound to proceed? As her members have voluntarily associated for their mutual instruction and edification in spiritual things, have they not a right to be satisfied that the individual who applies to be received among them, either as a private member or minister, entertains opinions, and bears a character, which will be consistent with the great object which they seek? Can any such individual reasonably refuse to satisfy them as to the accordance of his religious sentiments with theirs, if they think that both the law of Christ, and the nature of the case, render such accordance necessary to christian fellowship? If he could not reasonably refuse to give satisfaction *verbally* on this subject; could he with any more refuse to state his own sentiments *in writing*, and subscribe his name to that written statement? Surely to decline this, while he consented to give a verbal exhibition of his Creed, would wear the appearance of singular caprice or perverseness. But if no rational objection could be made to his subscribing a declaration, drawn up with his own hand, would it not be exactly the same thing, as to the spirit of the transaction, if, with a view, simply to ascertain the fact of his belief, not to dictate laws to his conscience, a statement previously drawn up by the church herself, should be presented for his voluntary signature? What is required of an individual in such case is, not that he shall believe what the church believes; but simply that he shall declare, as a matter of fact, whether he *does* possess that belief, which, from his voluntary application to be received into christian fellowship with that church, he may be fairly presumed to possess. —Again, I ask, is it possible to deny a church this right, without striking at the root of all that is sacred in the convictions of conscience, and of all that is precious in the enjoyment of christian communion? I fully grant, indeed, that, as her authority rests entirely on the declared will of Christ, she has no right, in the sight of God, to propose to a candidate, any other than a *sound orthodox Creed.* She cannot

possibly be considered as having a right, on this principle. to require his assent to anti-scriptural principles. Still, however, as the rights of conscience are unalienable; and as every church must be considered, of course, as verily believing that she is acting according to her Master's will, we must concede to her the plenary right, in the sight of man, to require from those who would join her, a solemn assent to her formularies.

But, perhaps, it will be asked, when a man has *already become* a member, or minister of a church, in virtue of a voluntary and honest subscription to her articles, and afterwards alters his mind;—if he be excluded from her communion as a private member, or deposed from office as a minister, is not here "oppression?" Is it not inflicting on a man a "heavy penalty" for his "opinions;" "punishing" him for his "sincere, conscientious convictions?"—I answer, if the Lord Jesus Christ has not only authorized, but solemnly commanded his church to cast the heretical, as well as immoral, out of her communion, and wholly to withdraw her countenance from those who preach "another gospel;"—then it is manifest, that the church, in acting on this authority, does no one any injury. In excluding a private member from the communion of a church, or deposing a minister from office, in the regular and scriptural exercise of discipline, she deprives neither of any natural right. It is only withdrawing that which was voluntarily asked, and voluntarily bestowed, and which might have been, without injustice, withheld. It is only practically saying—"You can no longer, consistently with our views, either of obedience to Christ, or of christian edification, be a minister or member with us. You may be as happy and as useful as you can in any other connection; but we must take away that authority and those privileges which we once gave you, and of which your further exercise among us would be subversive of those principles which we are solemnly pledged to each other to support." Is this language unreasonable? Is the measure which it contemplates oppressive? Would it be more just in itself, or more favourable to the rights of conscience, if any individual *could* retain his place as a teacher and guide in a church, contrary to its wishes; to the subversion of its faith; to the disturbance of its peace; and finally, to the endangering of its existence; and all this contrary to his own solemn engagements, and to the distinct understanding of its members, when he joined them? Surely every friend of religious liberty would indignantly answer, No! Such a church would be the oppressed party, and such a member, the tyrant.

The conclusion, then, is, that when a church makes use of a Creed in the manner that has been described; as a bond of union; as a barrier against what it deems heresy; and in conformity with what it conscientiously believes to be the will of Christ; it is so far from encroaching on the "rights" of others; so far from being chargeable with "oppression;"—that it is really, in the most enlightened manner, and on the largest scale, maintaining the rights of conscience; and that for such a church, instead of doing this, to give up its testimony to the truth and order of God's house; to surrender its own comfort, peace, and edification for the sake of complying with the unreasonable demands of a corrupt individual, would be to subject itself to the worst of slavery. What is the subjugation of the many, with all their interests, rights, and happiness, to the dictation of one, or a few, but the essence of tyranry. (*To be continued.*)

INJURIOUS MAXIM.

"An injurious and destructive maxim," says Dr. Clark, in his concluding observations on the 6th chapter of

Deut'y. "has lately been advanced, by a few individuals, which it is hoped is disowned by the class of Christians to which they belong; though the authors affect to be thought Christians, and rational ones too. The sum of the maxim is this: Children ought not to be taught religion for fear of having their minds biased to some particular creed; they should be left to themselves, till they are capable of making a choice, and choose to make one. This maxim is in flat opposition to the command of God: and those who teach it, show how little they are affected by the religion they profess. If they felt it to be good for any thing, they would certainly wish their children to possess it; but they do not teach religion to their children because they feel it to be of no use to themselves. *Meth. Rec.*

To the Editor of The Universal Asylum.

SIR,

THE enclosed essay, written by a lady in this city, contains many just and excellent thoughts, expressed in an agreeable and elegant style. I beg you would give them a place in your useful Asylum. I have only to add my wishes, that they may attract the attention of the ladies of our country; and that their influence, every where, may be equal to their merit.

Philad. Feb. 14th. 1791.

Among the female part of the community, whose young and susceptible hearts are formed for a sensibility to piety and devotional affections, we must particularly regret that lightness and vanity, which, where they prevail, supersede all serious reflection, and absorb in the engagements of dress, company, and conquest, the views of an immortal spirit. To such, a mite is offered from a benevolent heart, in addition to the treasures of instruction they have an opportunity of receiving: Will ye pause, my sisters,—and while pleasure allures, while vanity elates, and flattery sooths the heart, listen a moment to an advocate for eternity, who would plead with you for that part of yourselves, which shall survive when the spoiler hath laid low the pride of mortality, and corruption hath paled the blushing cheek, and defaced the harmonious form of beauty? Not in heaviness of heart, not in the gloom of austerity;—not in a frigid insensibility to human concerns, does religion require you to tread the path of duty. Her native aspect breathes benignity and peace; she smiles on the fulness of social enjoyment; and brightens, by her cheering influence, the innocent gratifications and amusements of life. But amusement, as it is too often pursued, is dissipation;—dissipation of time, health, and fortune; of all that is most precious in private and domestic life;—dissipation of those best affections of the soul, those intellectual enjoyments, which refine and dignify our natures. Perhaps from the bosom of retirement, and abstracted from the engagements of the gay world, its scenes appear in too strong colours;—but let the unbiassed voice of reason decide, whether from them there ever sprung a delight which ennobled the affections, refined the desires, or elevated the soul to the highest aim of its nature, an inward communion with our Maker, our God;—and the anticipation of immortal joys in his presence—"God is love!"—but he is likewise a God of purity and holiness; and the heart that would be accepted by him must cherish the influence of his divine spirit, and endeavour to assimilate itself, as far as our imperfect natures will admit, to this source of light and love. But how is this to be done?—by fluttering in the glare of vanity and pride?—by devoting that time which is allowed for improvement in intellectual acquirements, to frivolous consultations on dress and ornament; or squan-

dering, in idle and expensive gratifications, that fortune which the bounty of Providence has bestowed, by a continual round of empty amusements, trifling conversations, or other vain occupations which sometimes fill up the hours of a fashionable fine lady? Surely, surely no—Ye whose tastes are thus vitiated, appeal to your own hearts, and say, do ye even retain a relish for the more sublime indulgence of human happiness, or aspirings for the purity of that bliss which is to constitute our heaven hereafter?—where is the flow of elegant and virtuous sentiments which gives to society its polish, and to friendship its charms?—where is the glow of tender humanity, which expands to every son and daughter of distress;—which succours the necessitous, sooths the afflicted, and embraces in the wide circle of benevolence and compassion, those whom it has not the power to relieve?—where is that energy of pure affection and unlimited friendship, which unite in the most endearing of human connexions, which qualify you to fulfil the duties of wife and friend to the chosen of your hearts, and to unite in fond solicitude for the welfare of those tender beings whom heaven may commit to your charge?—Where is the ability of this arduous task, if yourselves are unenlightened, and the prime of your days wasted in pursuits unworthy a rational creature? —Alas! the capacity for an enjoyment of these pure delights, exists not in a heart insensible to religion, enslaved by the tyranny of fashion, and devoted to her fascinating pursuits.—

This is considering the cultivation of religious impressions, and the exertion of our noblest faculties, only as heightening the happiness of life; but in the hour of affliction, and what mortal is exempt from many such?—where is the source of comfort and hope, which can sustain the soul under the pressure of adversity?—The loss of friends, the decay of health, the harrassings of care, ask for a solace, which never will be found in the gay bustle of the world, or in the vapid repetition of its pleasures. But in a season of distress, how shall that heart be lifted up in prayer to the supporter of the wretched, which never swelled with gratitude and thankfulness for his benefits? When the prospects of life are darkened, how shall it look beyond them with hope to a scene of unmingled felicity, when it has never anticipated its delights! O for an awakening and persuasive voice, which might penetrate the inmost recesses of such hearts; and, if not totally insensible to the call of truth, arouse them from the dream of vanity, and chase the phantom from their bosoms.

ENGLISH BAPTIST MISSION.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Leslie, dated Calcutta, June 7, 1824.

We had now arrived in India, and to us it had a woful appearance. All that we had ever read of its degradation, fell far short of what we actually saw on our first landing. Tens of thousands of human beings, in every direction, almost naked,—idol temples on every hand,—and women in the most enslaved state. Much good, however, is doing at Madras, although it is far from being apparent, amidst the thousands that are there. At one of the stations of the Church Missionaries, there has been a great out-pouring of the Spirit, so that, even in one school, there are no less than twenty-three out of thirty youths, who give evidence of sincere conversion. We attend a monthly meeting of all the Missionaries in the place, and heard them give their several accounts of the state of religion at their various stations; and no meeting, to me, was ever more interesting. Eleven were present; three from the Church Missionary, two from the Society for promoting Christian knowledge, two from the

Wesleyan, two from the London Society, one from the American Board, and myself. All stated that idolatry is beginning to sit very loosely upon the people. Many of the converts have suffered great persecution for Christ's sake; and in some places, even Christian villages exist The people themselves are beginning to dispute with the Brahmins on the absurdities of Hindooism. --and, on one occasion a Brahmin was so confounded with some questions of the people concerning God, that he had to confess his ignorance; at which they, (in number about four or five hundred,) called to a Missionary, who was standing by, to come and teach them concerning the Deity. This we heard from the Missionary himself.

Serampore is a most beautiful place; built quite on the banks of a river, the air is pleasant and healthy, and the scene is enlivened by the plying up and down of numerous boats. Much harmony and Christian spirit prevails among the Mission family; and their kindness to all who visit them, is the most abundant. The breach made there by the death of Mr. Ward, is still most deeply felt, and is not likely to be filled up.

Calcutta is a very grand place; when you enter it, you have quite the idea of a city of palaces. However, it is far from being pleasant; from the number of houses, and people, and roads, the dust and heat are almost insupportable. We have been much alarmed for some time past, lest the Burmese should come and take the city. But our fears have now almost subsided, as the news of last week were, that our army had taken Rangoon, which, there is little doubt, will stop the Burmese, who had come so nearly to Calcutta as Ramoo. which is a little way from Chittagong. Nothing has been heard in this place from Mr. and Mrs. Judson, and Dr. Price, who are at Ava; but when our army took Rangoon, they found Messrs. Wade and Hough, American Missionaries, fast bound in chains.

From the New York Commercial Advertiser.

In the legislative proceedings published on Saturday, we stated that the pagan party of the Seneca Indians had sent in a petition, praying that the missionaries might be prohibited from residing among them. This petition was signed by the celebrated Red Jacket, and his associates, Green Blanket, Robert Bob, Twenty Canoes First, Twenty Canoes Second, Captain Snow, Two Guns, Dockstator, Bear Foot, Broad Head, Chief Warrior, Black Chief, Corn Planter, Elk Hunter, Bear Hunter, Fish Hork, John Sky, Blue Sky, Hot Bread, and Black Snake. It is well known to those who have noticed passing events, that a part of the Seneca tribe have ever been opposed to Christianity in any form, while a majority of the tribe have embraced its truths, and have become useful members of society.—We have visited all the Indian tribes within the bounds of this state, and some who reside in an adjoining territory. We saw their situation before the heralds of the Cross had opportunity of doing much good among them; we have marked their progress since, and we assert, without their fear of contradiction, that where the Gospel has been introduced, the spiritual and temporal condition of the Indians have been improved. The wilderness has become a garden; the chase is rapidly giving place to agriculture and the various necessary employments of civilized life. The tomahawk and the scalping knife are yielding to the plough and the sickle, and the warhoop is changed to songs of praise. "Previous to the introduction of the Gospel of Peace, the Arborginies considered their females as being of a very inferior order, and only fit to carry their effects from one encampment to one another. The scene is, now

changed; they are treated as companions, and both males and females are anxious for the improvement of their children. Their children, who were formerly brought up in ignorance and vice, are now regularly sent to school, and exhibit minds as susceptible of improvement as the generality of whites. Cold indeed must be the heart who can look upon such a change n the change in the condition of the Indians, and not rejoice, that men have been found, who have left their ease and comfort, and gone into the wilderness, for no other purpose than the melioration of the condition of the Aboriginies. Let them remember that their reward is not with men, and that the God whom they serve, is also the God of the red man.

CONNECTICUT MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

This important Institution, through the blessing of heaven, is still enabled to extend a helpful band to the destitute; and many, very many, shall rise up in the wilderness and solitary places and call her blessed. Between $7000 and $8000 have been expended the last year by this Society in sending the Gospel to those who are perishing; and the amount of labour performed by the Missionaries sent out is equal to the constant labour of one man for fifteen years. The fruits of these labours of love will probably be known only in the light of eternity.

Reli. Int.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH,
Hartwick Seminary.

The whole number of students regularly admitted and instructed in the Seminary, during the last annual term, amounted to seventy-one —ten of which have left the Institution at the expiration of the last term, with a view of either prosecuting their studies in some of our higher Institutions, or engaging in such other pursuits as circumstances may dictate.

THE DERVISE'S ANSWER, OR THE CAVILLER REFUTED—AN EASTERN STORY.

A certain man went to a Dervise, and proposed three questions: 1st, "Why do they say God is omnipresent? I do not see him in any place, show me where he is? 2d, Why is man punished for his crimes, since whatever he does proceeds from God? Man has no free will, for he cannot do any thing contrary to the will, of God; and if he had power he would doevery thing for his own good." 3d, "How can God punish Satan in hell fire, since he is formed of that element; and what impression can fire make on itself?" The Dervise took up a large clod of earth and struck him on the head with it. The man went to the Cazy, and said, "I proposed three questions to a certain Dervise, who threw a large clod of earth at my head, and made my head ache?" The Cazy having sent for the Dervise, asked, "Why did you throw a clod of earth at his head; instead of answering his questions?" The Dervise replied, "The clod of earth was an answer to his speech. He says he has a pain in his head, let him show me the pain, and I will make God visible to him. And why does he exhibit a complaint against me? Whatever I did was the act of God; I did not strike him without the will of God. What power do I possess? And as he is compounded of earth, how can he suffer pain from that element?"

The man was confounded, and the Cazy highly pleased with the Dervise's answer. He answered the fool according to his folly.—*Reli. Int.*

DYING CONFESSION OF A SAINT.

The Rev. Mr. D. when asked on his death, how he found himself, answered, "I have taken my good deeds and bad deeds, and thrown them together in a heap, and fled from both to Christ, and in him I have peace."

THE LUMINARY.

LEXINGTON:
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1825.

DR. FISHBACK AND TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY:

Or The BAPTISTS *and* PRESIDENT HOLLEY.

Solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.

"They make a *wilderness*, and call it peace."

Having taken a passing survey of Dr. Fishback's connection with the Board of Trustees of the T. U.; attended to his successive efforts at reform; and followed him to his final abandonment of that body, we have arrived at length in the progress of the disclosure to his last letter, presenting in ex tenso, a plan of reform We shall reserve our remarks on this subject for a subsequent No. At present we propose, to point out more fully the necessity of reform, by a reference to the state, and prospects of the institution. Here of course it will be understood that we refer to the college proper, in whose control and instruction the President is especially concern ed, and whose fortunes alone of all the departments (as it will presently be shewn by a reference to matters of fact) are very intimately blended with his own.

(1.) *Our first position then, which we would take, shewing reform to be necessa ry, is, "that there is taught in the institution a religion which is not the religion of the state."*

In the Public Literary institution of a state avowedly christian, the elements of that religion should, by the concession of the President's friends themselves, be taught to the youth. A few radical principles *common* to the denominations of christians properly so called, yet *peculiar* to the *Bible*, should be made the basis of Biblical instruction. Thus it would neither teach a religion which "in its catholic" and polluted arms would embrace all denominations however corrupt, nor be exclusively devoted to any *one* of them all. Thus it would avoid the peculiarity of a sect, and yet retain the grand peculiarities of the gospel Without party, truth might be made to triumph; and upon general principles a co-operation of christians in supporting the institution be effected, without the introduction of radical error.

Now in view of an admission which all parties make, we ask, what have been the facts upon this subject? What has been the religion actually taught in the T. U ? Many of the friends of the present administration say that *no religion* is taught in the institution. Some say the President is not a *christian* man, and therefore they *prefer him* to *any other*, because he will "let all religions alone." Of the correctness and tendency of such a theory, the public must judge. But this inference cannot be true; for upon the face of the catalogues we see it recorded as the special department of the President to teach the senior class the "first principles of theology." We have seen that the President before he came from Boston was an avowed Unitarian. Since his arrival among us, in the progressive development of his views, he has taught that there is no Devil and other fallen spirits; that human nature is not depraved; that natural religion *superseded the* necessity of revealed; that confession of sin was ridiculous, and to be reproached; &c. &c. The following are the certificates of two graduates, as respectable youth as ever left the institution.

"We attest the fact that Mr Holley made natural religion supersede the necessity of revealed; that he invariably made natural religion the foundation, and revealed, the superstructure, taking

away the former, the latter was worthless.

GEORGE W. ASHBRIDGE.
SIMEON CRANE."

"We were present, and heard Mr Holley ask, what do you think of those, who go about the country like braying asses, and telling God what poor hell-deserving scoundrels they are, and who burn brimstone under the noses of the people.

GEORGE W. ASHBRIDGE.
SIMEON CRANE."

Another graduate says,

"The impression left upon my mind by Mr. Holley's remarks upon Butler's analogy was, that natural religion was but the text of which revealed religion, so far as it was valuable, was but a commentary—that the common doctrine of depravity was a slur upon our nature—that it originated from false views of mental science, and is not consistent with God's moral government. SAM. P. PRESSLEY."

Three other equally respectable witnesses, two of whom had been members of the institution, testify to these general charges. In the fourth and sixth Nos. of the Pamphleteer, these statements may be seen at large. In prosecution of this view, we refer the reader to the *thesis* of famous memory which issued from the college in 1823, as an exercise of one of the students, in the Latin language. The following is a translation of the two last sentences.

"Revelation may be called only a picture of natural Religion, since it has only the same principles expressed in words."

"Either will conduct a man to heaven provided he faithfully follow it."

An Episcopalian paper of New-England, (the Religious Advocate) remarking on this thesis says—"It is rank Deism"—"has an obvious tendency to degrade the scriptures," &c. &c. For these assertions he was warmly assaulted by a writer signing himself Ultor, generally believed to have been the President himself, who attempted in various ways to defend the thesis, as "orthodox and christian in all its parts." In addition to this, twenty-six students of Transylvania University, graduates of three successive years, viz. 1821, 2, 3, in defence, as they supposed, of the President's religious system, write as follows: "We have been taught *the principles of a liberal and exalted* religion, *which hurled not its anethemas against all who were unfortunate enough not to follow its tenets*, BUT OPENED A PARADISE TO THE GOOD MAN OF EVERY COUNTRY AND EVERY RELIGION" That is, every religion, whether of Mahomed, the Deist or Brahmin could make *good men!* Add to all this the facts given to us by Dr. Fishback, after a long connection with the institution and acquaintance with the President's system, viz. —that it is one which supersedes *revealed religion*, or the religion of the land, and that the President pronounced Dr. Fishback's sermon, presenting *revealed as the exclusive religion of the bible, false, in the presence of the senior class, and of several members of the Board of Trustees.* We have therefore but to gather up these several evidences of facts thus spread upon the history of his administration, and we have an unanswerable proof of our first proposition, that the President teaches in the institution a religion not the revealed, and not the religion of the state. It becomes an *argument cumulative* in the establishment of the assertion.

(2.) *The necessity of reform in the general habits of the institution as influenced by the habits of the President is palpable to all parties and acknowledged by his best friends.*

It is not our intention to interfere with the private habits, or private religious opinions of the President, except so far as they affect the public interests. We rejoice with him and with all our fellow citizens in the exercise of our inestima-

ble rights on these subjects. But common sense discovers to ev'ry man that the personal habits and morals as well as religious principles of a Public Officer in a literary institution, and especially its principal, if made known to the youth must naturally a ffect their sentiments and characters. We have already seen upon evidence that his religious creed has been habitually exhibited to the students, it being too a system of radical error. Now, in reference to the habits and morals of the President, it is notorious that he attends the ball-room, the theatre, the circus, and the race field—that he is a man of fashion and a votary of pleasure. So publicly known are these habits that they were a year since announced and condemned by a member of our general assembly in the Legislative Hall of Kentucky. And what is especially to the point on this fact, is, that the remarks of the Hon'ble. member were made in direct reference to the effect of Dr. Holley's example upon the habits of the students. A bill had been introduced into the Legislature to forbid horse-racing, (and perhaps the use of billard tables,) within ten miles of Lexington. The reason assigned for desiring the passage of such a law was *the corrupting influence of such amusements on the students.* The good sense of the member alluded to, led him to say that it was in vain to attempt by such enactments the regulation of the students' morals, while the President himself engaged in such amusements. Now can it be supposed that such dissipation of time, such inevitable expense on dress, such injury to their morals &c. &c. as must be introduced by these habits, can be proper or useful to the youth of the land, or when fully known, be tolerated by the substantial population of the state? Never perhaps were nobler materials for forming great and useful men found, than in the youth of Kentucky. But with a set of habits, so pleasing to the natural propensities of young men, sanctioned by such high authority, and recommended by so imposing an example, can we expect their morals to be uncorrupted—their time to be directed in the best way to the pursuit of knowledge, or their money, which is procured "by the sweat of their fathers' faces," to be expended with economy and discretion? We are aware that young men are, at best, impatient of restraint and are predisposed, to the pursuit of pleasure, to inordinate dress —to the extravagant use of money and waste of time. But for this very reason it is the more important, since *at best* there is danger—that no sanction should be given to these propensities, and that no example should recommend and legalize habits that are evil. This is a subject so simple and so obvious, that it must appeal to the good sense of every citizen.

It is painful to us to be compelled in truth and justice, to make this exhibition. But the existence of so great an evil in an institution which is the property of the state, and in which the character of so many of our youth is formed, and their eternal prospects it may be ultimately fixed—calls aloud for immediate reform.

For the Western Luminary.

REFORMATION IN TRANSYLVAEIA UNIVERSITY.

I have read the various publications on the subject of Transylvania University in the Western Monitor and Western Luminary.—I find that the friends of Doctor Holley as President, hold out the idea perpetually that all those who believe that a reformation in the institution is necessary, and advocate it, are enemies to the University. This is great injustice, and ought to cover with shame and confusion of face those who are guilty of it. As well might the advocate of a pure and just administration of our public affairs be charged with hostility to the government: as well might the Trustees of the town of Lexington, who consider cleanliness of the streets to be favourable to

health, be charged with opposition to its interests: as well might parents who feel anxious for the happiness of their children in the life that now is and in that which is to come, be charged with being enemies to their children, as for the advocates of reformation in the University to be charged with being enemies to the institution.

The question to be decided is, whether a man ought to be supported as a president of a public institution of learning, by a christian and moral people, whose opinions of the Christian religion are such as to induce him in the presence of numerous spectators, and of all the classes at a public examination, to declare that to preach that the miracles wrought by Christ and which are recorded in the New Testament were designed to establish the truth of Christianity, is an attempt to establish a system of falshood. This is the point with its consequences which are now at issue between the friends of Dr. Holley as President and those who insist upon the necessity of a reformation in order to the prosperity of Transylvania.

The Philo Boons and Observers, instead of aspersing Messrs. Fishback and Breckenridge, are invited to come out and defend, in the face of the public, the affirmative of the question, or to abandon it.—They may depend upon it that the public mind will not be permitted to be diverted from this point. As an effort to gull the Baptists on this subject, and to avoid the question, I see it stated in the Monitor of March 19th by "Observer" that "this religious denomination," meaning the Baptist, "will not have religion taught in a college; they procure it in another way:" and yet Doctor Holley professes to teach "the first principles of Theology" there.

There are very few Baptists, Mr. Observer, who are willing to give up their sons to ignorance, infidelity or paganism, in a regular course of Collegiate education: there are very few who are willing to place their sons in the hands of deists or infidels to obtain an education: there are very few indeed who believe that by their being taught infidelity they will obtain the knowledge or the experience of the religion of Jesus Christ; and there are very few who believe that the best education that can be had will render their sons really useful and happy without the morality of the Gospel.

I heartily concur with a writer in the Monitor, some months ago, who says "It is a crying sin and a black reproach upon our institutions of learning that young men should complete a regular course of education without having become acquainted with the principles and evidences of the religion of their country—the Christian religion—"that they should be better acquainted with the heathen Gods than with the true God—with deism than with Christianity, and with the Pantheon than with the Bible—It is high time that this reproach be wiped off, and that our system of education be reformed and perfected."

I am opposed to the Legislature granting exclusive priveleges to any christian denomination by charter.—This is not agreeable to the letter or the spirit of our constitution; for as far as a charter goes to establish in the hands of a sect sectarian religious privileges, so far is the religion of that sect established to the exclusion of all others.

There can be no impropriety however in the Legislature securing to each sect something like a just representation, jointly and in common with each other, and with that portion of the community which is of no religion, in the management of a state institution of learning.—No sect is willing that their rights shall be exclusively controlled by another, or by the world.

We desire to have an actual proportionate participation with others in the management and control of our sons' education. We want none but a common interest there, and this we have no doubt the Legislature will give us with the other denominations, if petitioned for that purpose, which will doubtless be done at their next session.

To show that the plan of religious instruction proposed as part of the system of reformation for Transylvania University is not chimerical or singular, and that it is in the judgment of men distinguished for learning, experience and piety, true and important, I subjoin the following extract from an "address delivered by Dr. Lindsley at his inauguration as President of Cumberland College," with which I have no doubt that every pious man will agree. Yes, Mr. Observer, the pious Baptists too, who you say "will not have re-

ligion taught in a college." The Baptists expect their sons to procure religion by the agency of God's spirit through gospel truth, in which system Christ is the way, and the only way, the truth and the life: and in accordance with which they are commanded to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Doctor Lindsley remarks, "I have said that the heart, or the moral faculties, ought to be cultivated.—I am aware that a system of ethics or moral Philosophy usually constitutes a part of a college course, and the best part too. It is studied as a science just as Chemistry or Astronomy is studied.—But the moral powers need constant cultivation from infancy to manhood—Correct habits of thinking and acting are to be formed—Precept, lecture, exhortation, are not enough—The daily walk and conversation must be inspected, guarded, and moulded, if practicable, into the purest form—The Bible ought to be studied, and the lessons of wisdom diligently enforced and practically explained—I say nothing of creeds or confessions, or systems of doctrine—I speak of the Bible—the grand charter of our holy religion—of our common christianity—and who of the great christian family can object to this? In the heathen schools, youth are always taught the religion of the country—Every Musselman is required to be Master of the Koran—And shall Christian youth be less favoured than the Pagan and Mahommedan? Have we a book bearing the impress of heaven—confessedly embodying the purest morality ever yet known in the world—the only authentic record of the origin of our race, and of the most stupendous events which have occurred upon our globe—filled with scenes of real life the most instructive, with biographical incident the most extraordinary and pathetic, with strains of eloquence and poetry the most melting and sublime—and with all professing to be, and acknowledged to be, our only safe guide through life, and the foundation of all our hopes of a blessed immortality—Shall this book be excluded from our seminaries, and withheld from our youth, at the very period too, when they most need its salutary restraints and purifying influence? And this, lest, peradventure, some speculative error, or some sectarian opinion might be imbibed? as if worse errors, and more inveterate prejudices, and the most pernicious principles, will not be sure to find their way into that heart which remains a stranger to the hallowed precepts of the sacred volume—But I intend to offer no formal argument upon this point just now—In every place of education, the Bible ought to be the daily companion of every individual; and no man ought to be suffered to teach at all who refuses to teach the Bible—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is the doctrine of revelation, of reason and of experience."

Thus speaks Doctor Lindsley.—These sentiments form the principle features of the plan of reformation proposed for Transylvania University, as far as religion is concerned—But if "the Bible ought to studied and its lessons of wisdom diligently enforced and practically explained"—if "in every place of education the Bible ought to be the daily companion of every individual; and no man ought to be suffered to teach at all who refuses to teach the Bible;" if all this be true, is it not necessary that we employ qualified persons to superintend this most important concern, whose principles and character are formed according to the Bible, "the grand charter of our holy religion—of our common christianity?" Can these interests be safely committed into the hands of a divine who frequents race fields, theatres, and ball rooms, and who at a public examination declares, in the presence of the Trustees, and of the spectators and visitors, and of the classes, that to preach that the supernatural works wrought by Jesus Christ to prove the principles and doctrines of the christian religion, is to attempt to establish a system of falshood? This is the question that the Christian community is called upon to decide, and which the legislature will be required to act upon at its next session—And ye *Philo Boons* and *Observers*, no longer conceal yourselves under fictitious names, nor try to blind the people's eyes or gull the Baptists, by vilifying the characters of Messrs. Fishback and Breckenridge, but come out in your own proper names, and stake your reputation and character if you have any, in defence of the affirmative of the question, or give it up and become *real* friends to Transylvania University and to Lexington,—unite to reform the former, and

both will prosper; but be assured that unless this be done the Baptists will desert the institution.

A BAPTIST.

A CARD.

Several unprincipled individuals have of late attempted to injure the cause of missions and the character of its friends by scurrilous comments on the publication in a late No. of this paper of a list of donations to the Chickasaw mission. These same persons have previously complained that the monies given to missionaries were not accounted for to the public. The honest missionaries were desirous of correcting this unkind and unjust suspicion, by a publication of a list of donations —Our paper was chosen as the medium. We erased from the list whatever could identify the name or gift with any individual for whom we had any right to exercise such a discretion, so far as it could be done without defeating the object of the publication, *which was to let those persons know that their gifts had been received and acknowledged at the station for which they were intended by the donors.* The malignity of such minds is still more obvious when it is remembered that the fitting of the initials to the names is a surmise of their own.

MARRIED.

On Thursday the 31th ult. Capt. ISAAC LANSDALE, of Louisville to Miss SARAH daughter of Robert C. Harrison, Sen. of Fayette county.

Communicated for the Western Luminary.

DIED, on Wednesday, March the 30th, after a lingering sickness of several months, in the 20th year of his age, GEORGE TROTTER, Jun. son of George Trotter, Sen. of this place.

We have seldom recorded the death of a more amiable and lovely young man, or of one whose untimely end will be more deeply lamented by the circle of his numerous kindred and friends. We know that he who is chronicled with the dead, can derive no pleasure from the praises of men. But though he has passed those limits at which human praise and human censure, forever cease to affect—yet we would by his example, called back from the grave, admonish the crowd of his young associates and friends who have been permitted to survive him. "*Though dead he ye speaketh.*"

In his last sickness he found that good morals and natural religion and taste and human acquirements could cast no light upon eternity and impart no hope to a dying man. His views of his condition as a helpless sinner were clear and evangelical—and his cries for mercy at the throne of grace, affected most deeply not only the hearts of the friends who surrounded his bed, but as we trust the heart of the sympathising Saviour.—His penitence, his simple-hearted trust in Jesus Christ, his affecting views of the love of God—and his desire for the salvation of those around him, impart a consoling hope of his eternal peace. Yet there is always danger of fatal delusion in a repentance that is attempted on the fading border of life. Let his voice of admonition deter his youthful friends from a similar delay of preparation for Eternity. The interests are too awfully vast, the result is mingled with too alarming an uncertainty, to hazzard it all upon a dying venture. In health and youth and life, prepare for death.

A Friend of the Deceased.

KENTUCKY BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Anniversary of the Bible Society of Kentucky will be held in McChord's Church on Thursday April 14th, at 10 o'clock, A M. The report o the Society's proceedings will be read and several appropriate speeches be delivered on the occasion. Our fellow citizens are respectfully invited to attend.

REVIVALS OF RELIGION IN FRANCE.

In the Evangelical Magazine for January, we find an interesting journal of a pious student from the Missionary Seminary at Basle, in Switzerland, who, at the request of their pastors, spent several weeks last September, in visiting some Protestant churches in France, within a days ride of Paris. During this visit he was surrounded from morning to night by persons who desired to consult him, and converse

with him on their religious interests. "I saw," says he, "in these country places, a number of individuals and families who three years ago were sunk in the grossest ignorance, and who would now be eminent as Christians, even among their fellow Christians of other countries. The Lord has begun a good work in these parts, and we may hope that by the influence of his Spirit, it will be continued and extended." In a letter transmitting this journal to the editors of the Evangelical Magazine, Mr. Wilks of Paris, adds, "I have myself lately made a journey through the south of France, and have had the inexpressible pleasure to witness there also the commencement and progress of the same good work."

N. Y. Observer.

MERDEEN.

Merdeen is a city of Asiatic Turkey, 45 miles S. of Diarbekir, and contains about 2,500 families; of which 500 are Syrian Christians, 100 Syrian Catholics, 200 Armenian Catholics, several Chaldean Catholics, and 25 familres of Jews. The Syrian Christians have a patriarch residing at Damascus; the Syrian Catholics have neither church nor priest; the Armenian Catholics have an archbishop and a bishop, who are entirely dependent on the Propaganda of Rome; the Chaldean Catholics have a patriarch at Diarbekir. The members of these different denominations were generally anxious to obtain copies of the Scriptures, and were supplied by Mr. Wolf to some extent. *N. Y. Observer.*

Yellow Fever.—M. Andouard, one of the Physicians of the military hospital at Paris, has published a very interesting memoir, under the title of "Considerations on the Origin and Causes of Yellow Fever, from observations on that Disorder at Barcelona in 1821, and at Port du Passage in 1823." In this treatise he proposes the following question, which is equally important to the science of medicine, and to morality and humanity, namely—Is not the Slave Trade one of the principal Causes of the Yellow Fever? Striking experiments, and a strict examination of numerous and authentic facts, have induced the author to decide in the affirmative. The Committee of the Royal Academy of the Science has declared that this question was new and important, and expressed a wish that Dr. Andouard's treatise should be published. *Lond. pap.*

It appears by official statements that the revenue of Great Britain for 1824, amounted to the enormous sum of 54,286,192 pounds sterling, or 241,049,742 dollars.

Unusual consternation rages in North Holland. A great part of the Island of the Texel is under water. The accounts from Terschelling, Sliedrecht, Heerjansdam, and Sheyn, are full of details of the disasters caused by the inundation.

At the Helder the injury has been more serious. Supplies of provisions in boats, left the city on Saturday evening; and in the course of Sunday advice was received of more than 130 persons having been extricated from a state of danger. Flat boats are also employed in saving the cattle.

Lond. pap.

NEW-YORK, *March* 12.

During the 48 hours ending at 12 o'clock last night, when our paper went to press no less than 83 vessels arrived at this port from sea—many of them ships of the largest class, and all with valuable cargoes. The constant influx of property to this market, excites the astonishment of even those who have been most extravagant in their calculations as to the rapid growth and prosperity of this city.

POETRY.

For the Western Luminary.

These lines were composed upon the following interesting incidents:—A family in the Green River Country was in the dead of night suddenly aroused by the crying of one of the children. Awaking, the Parent hastened up stairs, and found the roof and ceiling in flames. He rescued his child, and fled with the family from the house. As they had gotten on the threshold of the door, the whole of the roof, &c. fell in undistinguished ruins. The family grateful for preservation entered into a near hovel and there erected an altar from which incense of prayer ascended to God, who had afforded them so signal an escape.

Twas night and all was still, the deep profound
Of darkness, and of silence cast around
Their magic influence, and the vigil light
Of many a star illum'nd the wary night.
Twas in that hour when sleep locks up the eye
Of sorrow even, and the moments fly
As sweet and swift as messengers of Heaven,
Or fleet as light that from the meteors driven.
The faithful cur, as sentinel would keep
The watch, now sunk in sombre sleep.
No eye save His invisible to sense,
Was wakeful to alarm, or yield defence.
Heard you that sound, as tho' from stifled breath?
Hark! 'tis my child! she gives the moan of death,
The parent cries, and quick ascends the way,
The house all wrapt in flames and light as day.
Swift through the threatning fire and curling smoke,
With all a father's sympathy, he broke.
Fearless of death, he only thought to save
His lovely infant, from the untimely grave.
He snatched his child—with rapid pace he fled,
He knew not whether living now, or dead.
When to the lintel of the door he came,
The roof and timbers fell, and all in flame;
His child was safe, all else was now consumed,
A mass of ruin, and in fire entomb'd.
Houseless, and clad but ill, the little band,
As pilgrims sojourn'd in a weary land.
Silence prevails, they tend their onward way
To reach a hovel near, and make their stay.
No murmuring voice was heard, nor even a sigh
Could pierce the ear of Majesty on high.
They enter, (solemn scene) delightful view,
Tho' all is lost, to Jesus they are true,
"Come let us bow before our Father's throne,
"Lowly adore, and say "thy will be done."
Their breath ascends, it flies to thine abode
Oh! thou incarnate ever glorious God!
To whom can pilgrims come in time of need?
Thou, who the naked clothe, the hungry feed!
But where, Oh, where shall the ungodly fly
When thunders shake, and lightnings melt the sky,
When flames sulphureous rage, and floods of fire,
Shall close the scene, and nature shall expire.
No sinner then, can audience have in Heaven,
No pardon issues forth, nor sins forgiven,
No lamb to feel the terrors of that blow
That strikes the guilty dead, the rebel low.
But Jesus smiles, he bids his weary saints
To dry their tears and silence their complaints,
To cease from prayer, to join in hymns of praise
To him who reigns in Heaven, and will through endless days.

TYRO.

Lexington, March, 1825.

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NOTICE.

I use this method of requesting those friends who have one or more of my books in their possession at this time to return them as soon as possible. My present arrangements make this request necessary.

JOHN BRECKENRIDGE.